



# News Release

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## **Pollution restricts shellfish harvest in five areas, threatens others**

**OLYMPIA** – The Washington State Department of Health recently completed its annual water quality evaluation of more than 100 commercial shellfish harvesting areas.

As a result of the evaluation, the department will place only portions of the following five locations on restriction this summer: Poverty Bay (King County), Bay Center (Pacific County), Rocky Bay (Pierce County), Vaughn Bay (Pierce County), and Portage Bay (Whatcom County).

The restrictions are due to high levels of bacterial pollution in the water. An additional 18 areas were identified as meeting the current water quality standard; however, these areas remain threatened with restrictions due to pollution levels.

The 18 areas are Clallam County – East Straits; Grays Harbor County – Grays Harbor, Pacific Coast; Jefferson County – Hood Canal #3; King County – Poverty Bay; Kitsap County – Dyes Inlet; Mason County – Annas Bay, North Bay; Pacific County – Bay Center, Naselle River, Nemah River; Pierce County – Burley Lagoon, Rocky Bay, Vaughn Bay; Skagit County – Swinomish; Snohomish County – South Skagit Bay; Thurston County – Henderson Inlet; and Whatcom County – Portage Bay.

In all 18 locations, only a portion of the shellfish growing area is impacted. In several areas, efforts are underway to fix the problems.

Last year, 17 commercial shellfish harvesting areas were listed as “threatened” due to pollution.

“We need excellent water quality for shellfish harvesting. Finding and fixing pollution sources to protect shellfish benefits everyone who uses Washington’s beaches,” said Jerrod Davis, director of the Office of Environmental Health and Safety.

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Over the past five years, the department has invested more than \$15 million through the [National Estuary Program](#) in pollution reduction programs and projects, all in an effort to ensure shellfish are safe to eat.

The National Estuary Program supports local communities with identifying and correcting polluted shellfish harvesting areas.

The department is responsible for the safety of all harvested shellfish in the state. Information on shellfish harvesting areas is available on the department's [shellfish program website](#).

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